

Message Text

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13-12

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 DHA-02 IO-11 CU-02 AID-05 /085 W

----- 103460

R 070856Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2791

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, ZA

SUBJECT: STUDENT STRIKE AT UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

REF: LUSAKA 0105, 0122, 0277, 0293 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA (UNZA) IN LUSAKA WENT ON STRIKE FEB 5 TO PROTEST ALLEGED INFRINGEMENTS OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM CONSEQUENT TO ARREST AND DETENTION OF UNZA POLITICAL SCIENCE LECTURER LIONEL CLIFFE. PRINCIPAL TARGET HOWEVER APPEARS BE REMOVAL TWO FACULTY MEMBERS SUGGESTING THAT ACADEMIC INTRIGUE AS WELL AS ACADEMIC FREEDOM ALSO INVOLVED. GRZ IS WATCHING SITUATION BUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAS TAKEN NO ACTION YET AGAINST STUDENTS. DETENTIONS

OF OTHER EXPATRIATE LECTURERS SUSPECTED OF BEING BEHIND STUDENT UNREST COULD, HOWEVER, FOLLOW. END SUMMARY.

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. SOME 1500 STUDENTS REFUSED TO ATTEND CLASSES FEB 5. IN MIMEOGRAPHED STATEMENT ISSUED BY UNZA STUDENTS UNION, STUDENTS PROTESTED THAT CLIFFE ARREST HAS INHIBITED BOTH FACULTY AND STUDENTS FROM FREE DISCUSSION OF POLITICAL ISSUES AND HAS COMPELLED UNIVERSITY TO CANCEL HIS CLASSES AS OTHER FACULTY UNWILLING TEACH THESE COURSES FOR FEAR OF DETENTION. HOWEVER, PRINCIPAL GOAL OF STUDENTS' STRIKE WAS STATED TO BE PETITION FOR REMOVAL OF PROF. EYO NDEM, NIGERIAN DEAN OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES FACULTY, AND KASUKA MUTUKWA, YOUNG US-EDUCATED ZAMBIAN LECTURER IN POLITICAL SCIENCE. NDEM AND MUTUKWA ACCUSED OF "FORMING AXIS" TO ADVANCE THEIR OWN CAREERS AT EXPENSE OF FELLOW LECTURERS, ESPECIALLY WHITES, AND OF DENOUNCING FACULTY MEMBERS TO GOVT AUTHORITIES AS SUBVERSIVES. IN SEPARATE FLYER TO STUDENTS ISSUED BY "THE VANGUARD OF ZAMBIAN PROGRESSIVES", NDEM ATTACKED AS OPPORTUNIST, SYCOPHANT, AND REACTIONARY WHILE MUTUKWA CHARGED WITH BEING IN PAY OF CIA. STUDENTS HAVE VOWED REMAIN OUT OF CLASSROOMS UNTIL NDEM AND MUTUKWA DISMISSED.

3. REPORTING STRIKE, ZAMBIA DAILY MAIL QUOTED SHAKEN NDEM AS SPECULATING THAT STRIKE HAD BEEN STIMULATED BY SOME SELFISH EXPATRIATE LECTURERS WHO OPPOSED PROPOSALS BY NDEM AND MUTUKWA TO REVAMP CURRICULUM TO INTRODUCE GREATER SPECIALIZATION AND THEREBY PERMIT UNZA OVER TIME TO TRAIN ITS OWN FACULTY TO REPLACE FOREIGN LECTURERS. NDEM NOTED THAT THERE HAS ALSO BEEN SOME GRUMBLING ABOUT HIS REFUSAL TO CONVENE FACULTY MEETING TO DISCUSS CLIFFE DETENTION. NDEM SAID HIS REFUSAL, WHICH HE STATED WAS UPHELD BY UNZA PRO-VICE CHANCELLOR MUSONDE, BASED ON BELIEF THAT IN CURRENT STATE OF EMERGENCY SUCH AN ASSEMBLY MIGHT BE "MISINTERPRETED".

4. HOME AFFAIRS MINISTER AARON MILNER TOLD DAILY MAIL THAT UNDER STATE OF EMERGENCY SUCH STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS ARE ILLEGAL. GOVT IS WATCHING SITUATION AT UNZA VERY CLOSELY, MILNER QUOTED AS SAYING, AND ADDED THAT "THERE ARE LIMITS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO OUR PATIENCE." END UNCLASSIFIED.

5. COMMENT: IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE HOW FAR STUDENT STRIKE, WHICH BOTH PRESS AND UNIVERSITY SOURCES HAVE SAID WAS FAIRLY EFFECTIVE DURING FIRST DAY, REPRESENTS GENUINE PROTEST OVER CLIFFE DETENTION AND HOW MUCH IS DUE TO INTRIGUE AND BACK-BITING AMONG FACULTY MEMBERS. FULBRIGHTERS AND OTHERS AT UNZA HAVE REMARKED TO US ON STRONGLY PREVALENT

MARXIST ATMOSPHERE ON CAMPUS, STEMMING IN GREAT PART FROM PRESENCE OF SOME AMERICAN, WEST EUROPEAN, AND SOUTH AFRICAN FACULTY MEMBERS OF LEFTIST PERSUASION AS WELL AS FROM THE FEW SOVIETS ON FACULTY. NDEM AND MUTUKWA ARE NOT MARXIST AND THEREFORE MAY BE REGARDED AS UNSYMPATHETIC OR HOSTILE TO VIEWS AND ASPIRATIONS OF MORE MARXIST FACULTY. NDEM, ONE-TIME MINISTER OF EDUCATION IN BREAK-AWAY BIAFRAN GOVT, MAY ALSO BE OBJECT OF SLANDER CAMPAIGN INSTIGATED BY NIGERIAN LOYALISTS HERE.

6. AS MILNER'S REMARKS TO PRESS SUGGEST, ZAMBIAN AUTHORITIES CONSIDER STUDENT STRIKE AS ILLEGAL AND WILL UNDOUBTEDLY REGARD REFERENCES TO CLIFFE AND TO THREATS TO ACADEMIC FREEDOM AS STILL ANOTHER FOREIGN-ORGANIZED CHALLENGE TO PARTY AND GOVT POLICIES. RESULT COULD BE TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF UNZA BUT MORE LIKELY CONSEQUENCE WILL BE REDOUBLED EFFORTS BY SPECIAL BRANCH TO INVESTIGATE POLITICAL VIEWS AND ACTIVITIES OF EXPATRIATE FACULTY MEMBERS. SOME OTHERS OF THESE MAY FIND THEMSELVES JOINING CLIFFE IN DETENTION IN LUSAKA CENTRAL PRISON OR ELSE DEPORTED. GOVT NERVOUSNESS ABOUT STUDENT UNREST IS PROBABLY HEIGHTENED AS A CONSEQUENCE OF HEAVY CRITICISM IT IS RECEIVING FROM PUBLIC AND FROM MP'S OVER RECENT STEEP PRICE HIKES AND OTHER ECONOMIC QUESTIONS. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE YET THAT STUDENT CONCERNS HAVE STRUCK SYMPATHETIC CHORD AMONG GENERAL PUBLIC OR THAT STUDENTS CAPBLE OF MOUNTING CHALLENGE TO ZAMBIAN REGIME OR ITS POLICIES.

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